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VOLUME XLIV

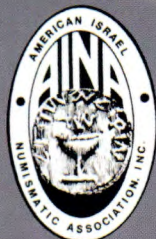
No. 3 & 4

MAY-AUGUST 2011

VISIONS OF



ISRAEL



- Plus:**
- *Boris Schatz and the Bezalel School*
 - *Paul Vincze, medallic sculptor*
 - *AINA and People of the Book*
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ANDREW PERALA, EDITOR

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ISRAEL-JUDAIC NUMISMATIC WEBSITES

I want to recommend a few websites you can visit to add to your knowledge and to have more fun with your hobby.

If you don't have a computer or have one but don't know how to use it — all I can say is: you are missing a lot. It's really not that difficult — and it is never too late to learn. Ask a youngster in your family to show you how — and you will thank me later.

First is the American Israel Numismatic Association. Find us at www.theshekel.org. You can read about 20 illustrated articles from past issues of *The Shekel* and you can refer to the *Index to Volumes XXVI-XXXV* (1993-2002). You will also find AINA's Bylaws and *Price Trends of Israel Coins and Medals*.

Next is the excellent website of the Israel Coins and Medals Corporation — www.israelmint.com. In addition to descriptions of recent offering of coins, medals, etc., you will find a catalog containing all of Israel's commemorative coins and medals issued since 1958, searchable by subject, year, etc.

If you are interested in learning about ancient Judaeian and related coins, you can read my *Handbook of Biblical Numismatics*, fully illustrated with coins identified by Hendin numbers (from his *Guide to Biblical Coins*), at www.amuseum.org/book.

In the good old days, there were more than two dozen Israel Coin Clubs throughout the country where collectors could gather and learn about new issues, new discoveries, or just socialize. Today this is happening on the Internet at Face-

book's *Israel Coins and Stamps Group*. You can join by visiting www.facebook.com and searching for "Israel Coins."

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There is a wealth of information about the Jewish-American Hall of Fame medals, Jewish medalists, historic Judaic medals, the collection of Einstein medals assembled by Harry Flower, etc. at www.amuseum.org/jahf.

All AINA members, along with families, friends and guests, are invited to attend our annual meeting on Thursday, August 18, 1 to 3 p.m. at the World's Fair of Money, Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont (near Chicago). The meeting is free, and you will hear about future issues from Arthur Boxer, CEO of the Israel Coins and Medals Corporation, and an illustrated lecture by AINA Board Member Oded Paz about Jewish Elongated Coins, such as the one pictured that I made in Jerusalem during AINA's last trip to Israel.



Happy collecting,

Mel

P.S. In order to catch up from the delay caused by the changeover of editors, and upgrading to a full-color magazine, we have made this a double issue.

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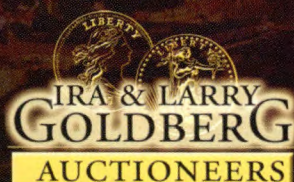
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BORIS SCHATZ

AND MEDALS OF THE BEZALEL SCHOOL

THE ART OF GENRE AND THE PURSUIT OF NATIONALISM

BY IRA REZAK, M.D.

Identity, that sense of who we are and where we fit into the world around us, is obviously important to each person as an individual but also interests those who wish to influence us. The sources and the very nature of personal and group identity are the province of psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists, but the consequences of group identity excite the attention of less academic operatives - politicians, religious leaders, businessmen and, yes, artists, at least those who wish to sell their art.



Boris Schatz, in a 1923 photograph, was a successful sculptor whose artistry was sought by titans of industry, but did not always meet the standards of art critics.

Art, as a form of communication, is by definition interpersonal; so artists who aspire to a public are positioned at the critical interface between their own personal sense-of-self and the interests, tastes and judgments that help define the identity of that audience they seek to reach.

Medallic art especially, since it is

Continued

LEADERSHIP, IDENTITY IN BRONZE ART



"Louis Pasteur" (1893) cast bronze, 153 millimeters. Schatz created this striking medallion of the renowned scientist while living and working in Paris.

Continued
replicated and published, tends to come, sooner or later, even if unpredictably, into the intimate grasp and private contemplation of many different individuals.

Nationalism was a particularly well established form of collective identity in the 19th and 20th centuries, and thus a theme through which many medallion artists have sought to reach and influence their expected audience.

Genre, the depiction of so-called "types," as opposed to specific individuals or even more culturally established mythological or symbolic figures, privileges what we might call "representative anonymity."

The use of types and genre from the mid-19th century onward, however, connotes two overlapping but somewhat different ideal categories.

The first suggests that the figure is typical, representative of a group such

as a nation, or a class; for example, a farmer, a mother or a child.

Such tropes evoke community, even an ordinariness, which any member of the same community, the viewer included, may readily identify.

The other category is what we usually call ideal, whether in the positive sense of a hero, someone to serve as a role model, or to project an opposite, negative model; here the typology is hierarchical and judgmental.

Such idealized types were popular during the heyday of nationalism but have become devalued in post-modern eyes through overuse and abuse by totalitarian propagandists. But it is well to reflect that in this category, the representative genre figure has long been in use in communitarian propaganda, albeit of a more subtle, perhaps more benign, sort.

The present essay focuses on the

Continued

SCHATZ'S SHTETL IDENTITY EXPLORED



"Sad Thoughts" photograph of plaster (1897) of a Bulgarian peasant; a Genre work, actual size unknown.

Continued

career of Boris Schatz (1866 to 1932), an academic sculptor of the late 19th and early 20th centuries who, somewhat unusually, worked on three continents, and who devoted the later decades of his life to teaching and the creation of a school of art that he passionately believed could and should advance a nationalistic program.

Schatz wrote a good deal about his own aspirations and ambitions. As a public figure, he was memorialized by colleagues and students. Thus, a review of his life and work allows us insight not only into his aesthetic and technique but also into the intended and actual impact of his art and ideals on others, both during his own life and after his death.

Schatz was born in 1866 in Varno, a tiny village in what today is Lithuania but was then located in that limited part of the Russian Empire where Jews were permitted to live, the so-called Pale of Settlement. In his later biographical monograph Schatz recalled that his "entire town was so poor that it did not possess a single drawing, lithograph or photograph."

His parents wished him to become a rabbi and initially sent him to traditional schools. But his grandfather, who was a rabbi, filled his head with such fantastic, invented tales that as a child Schatz was given to graphic visions. Thus his childhood memories were personal and vivid, direct from life and not particularly influenced by contemporary illustrative conventions.

At age 15, he escaped his early Ghetto life and moved to Vilna, turning to the study first of science and later of art. He came under the influence of Haskalists, a circle of anti-religious, self-called "enlightened," friends and teachers.

No artwork remains identifiable from his earliest periods in Vilna and, later, in Warsaw. Yet by 1890 he was recently married and had moved to Paris where he studied sculpture under Mark Antokolsky, a Jewish artist who had succeeded in attaining a reputation while still in Russia.

Schatz also studied painting at Corman's Academy, a conservative

Continued

CATALYST: HERZL AND THE DREYFUS AFFAIR

Continued

school also attended by Van Gogh. While in Paris, in 1893 Schatz made cast portrait medallions (of Karl Marx, Louis Pasteur and Jean Charcot) in the style then fashionable.

His free standing statu-ary, including biblical subjects such as Yochebed (1892), the nurse of Moses, and Mattathias (1894), the Hasmonean rebel against the ancient Syrian Greek rulership in Israel, were romanticized academic productions which won Schatz, among other prizes, a silver medal at the 1900 *Paris Exposition Universelle*.

On the other hand, despite such activity and modest recognition, Schatz was unable to support his family by sculpture. And during the 15 years he remained in Paris, was forced to work in ceramic tile design, and even boxed and wrestled professionally.

In 1895 Schatz was summoned to Sofia where he became the Sculptor to the Royal Bulgarian Court, a position he would hold for 10 years.

But, just before he left Paris, an historic event occurred that would have a decisive effect on his thematic focus as an artist, and indeed of the goals he would set for himself for the rest of his life.

Beginning in 1894, the Dreyfus



"Theodore Herzl", Memorial (1904); reduction circa 1925, struck bronze, silvered, 57 x 70 mm. Herzl was a central figure in the life and works of Boris Schatz.

Affair resulted in overt Anti-Semitism in France on a scale hitherto unprecedented. Jews such as Schatz, who had previously believed that their integration within Western Europe was a reasonable option for the masses of Jews then being economically and politically oppressed in the Russian Empire, now became concerned about the future of the Jews as a people.

Theodor Herzl, a journalist who, like Schatz, was in Paris at the time of the Dreyfus trials became likewise suddenly alarmed about the prospects for Jewish survival in the cosmopolitan West, and proceeded from 1894 onward to devote all his energies to Zionism, a movement for Jewish nationality, distinct from religiosity.

At the Bulgarian court Boris Schatz primarily was called upon to execute

Continued

MEDAL SERIES EXPLORED GENRE TYPES

Continued

public statuary. But he also designed decorative art for the royal court, including, for example, silver book-bindings as royal gifts for the Russian Czar and others.

He also now began to work privately and more consistently in the medium of cast medallic plaques.

Beginning with Bulgarian peasants and gypsy figures (1897 to 1899) Schatz also commenced what would become a series of some 20 to 30 studies of Jewish types, mostly sentimental genre portraits or scenes based on his earlier life in Jewish shtetls, the small towns in the Russian Pale of Settlement.

These works, evoking Jewish life in Russia, though fashioned originally in Bulgaria, were later to be much reproduced and copied in Austria and Palestine, are presented in an academically realistic style, and invariably project a deliberate tenderness toward “the old country” and its ways.

The ultimate utilitarian fate of Schatz’s genre works was their replication and sale, in many different sizes and formats, to Jewish emigres from Eastern Europe who moved to America and other Western lands, as sentiment-bearing souvenirs.

Exemplary of this, in Schatz’ most characteristic personal style, is “A Jewish Mother” (1904) which depicts the mother, obviously poor, lifting her small child so that he may become accustomed at an early age to



"A Jewish Mother" (1904), reduction c. 1910, cast bronze, 160 x 102 mm.

give charity to the poorer still or, in this specific case as evidenced by the inscription on the collection box (“the charity of Rabbi Meir”), to the elderly and often destitute pious pilgrims and immigrants to Jerusalem.

“Blessing the Sabbath” (1903), “Studying the Talmud” (circa 1904), “The Matchmaker” (1904) and “One of the People of the Book” (1904) likewise evoke personal recollections of, indeed a sense of ongoing responsibility to, those fellow Jews, members of one’s own people, left behind in the villages and towns of Russia.

Continued

INDIVIDUAL'S POWER ALSO EXPLORED



The piercing gaze and forward stance in "Judith" projects the resolute and ultimately tragic path of a woman committed to a fateful assassination; (1905) reduction c. 1925, cast bronze, 85 x 52 mm.

Continued

In addition to such genre works, Schatz soon came to depict biblical personalities, but not for religious inspiration as was more typical of much contemporary Christian medallic art.

Rather, his selection of subjects, and the use to which they were put in his medals, reflected his own growing preoccupation with and commitment to the Jews as a nation, to a people which had historically been and was again immersed in conflict, and which required flesh and blood, even muscular heroes as models.

"Jeremiah" (1911) records the prophesies of the tragedy that would befall the Jews as a people, which would lead to their exile from the Land of Israel, and looks out at the viewer whose present day political circumstances is thus comprehended in his concern.

"Judith" (circa. 1905) portrays an overtly activist heroine of the biblical age. Arrayed in all her finery but appropriately looking very determined, she is shown departing on a mission to first seduce and then assassinate and behead the general of the Assyrian invaders, Holofernes.

Reaching further, beyond his art, Schatz met in 1903 with Herzl, who was by then the undoubted leader of an international Zionist effort to re-establish Jewish settlement and statehood in the historical land of Israel, then Ottoman Palestine.

Schatz proposed to Herzl his vision of an artistic enterprise which he believed would be invaluable in strengthening the necessary Jewish national identity, an identity with roots in the Bible but which had been much attenuated during nearly two thousand years of exilic dispersion.

His plan, above all, centered on the creation and development of a specifically Jewish art, since previous artists who happened to be Jewish had typically worked only within the cultural milieux and in the styles of the nations among whom they had

Continued

REBUILDING OF JERUSALEM IMPORTANT

Continued
dwelt.

This goal would also necessitate the foundation both of a school for Jewish art, and of a museum, to train artists and to display their work, preferably in the bosom of the new Jewish settlement.

Herzl died soon afterward of tuberculosis, in 1904, relatively unexpectedly. His death deeply affected Schatz, who was moved to create several commemorative plaques soon after. "Herzl" (1904), displays a profile bust of the fallen leader flanked by a pictorial reference to Moses, an earlier leader of the Jews who like Herzl was unable to personally lead his people in their return to their promised land.

"Requiem" (1904) depicts a mixed group of those grieving for Herzl, the religious mingling with the secular, the oriental Jews and the occidental, the old with the young; even a woman can be seen among the assemblage of traditionally male mourners.

Herzl's death, and his own plan for a school and museum now clinched Schatz' determination to abandon his position as Court Sculptor and emigrate to Palestine.

But, in truth, there was another incentive to leave Bulgaria. In Sofia, Schatz had been at the center of an artistic and literary circle in which he tried to maintain the quasi-bohemian salon life he had but tasted in Paris.



Frontispiece of "Jerusalem Rebuilt 1924", depicting Boris Schatz, right, speaking with Bezalel, the artist of Moses.

It was within the very circle he had created that one of his own students seduced his wife, who then ran off with the student, taking with her their young daughter, Schatz' only child from their marriage, Angele.

At once personally discouraged but politically energized, Schatz left for Jerusalem at the end of 1905 where he would be based for the remaining quarter century of his life.

Schatz named the newly formed school of art "Bezalel" after the biblical artist appointed by Moses to construct and decorate the sanctuary used for worship during the Hebrews' wandering in the Sinai desert before they entered the land of Israel.

Continued

BEZALEL SCHOOL PROJECT INITIATED

Continued

Exodus 31 explains: "I have called by name Bezalel ... of the tribe of Judah, and have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship to devise skillful works in gold, in silver and in brass."

The frontispiece of Schatz' emotional and futuristic opus, *Yerushalayim Habenuyah* (Jerusalem Rebuilt, 1924), graphically emphasizes the ambition of the enterprise, showing Bezalel, the biblical designer of the menorah, the seven branched candelabrum symbolic of the Temple and of the Jewish people, in direct conversation with Schatz on the restored crenellated walls of Jerusalem (ironically, a 16th Century Ottoman construction).

In fact, many of the creations, publications and emblems of the Bezalel School took similar anachronistic liberties in an effort to link the past, present and future of the Jewish people, liberties with respect to the history and particularly to the artistic trajectory of the Jews in order to insist upon the presumption of continuity so basic to their collective identity.

Thus, for example, the Art Nouveau movement then current in central Europe became the preferred graphic mode at Bezalel, at least partly because its ahistoric posture was capable of embodying a dreamy, even futuristic romanticism even as it



"The Matchmaker" (1904), reduction in cast bronze c. 1910, silvered, 76 x 41 mm. In a Bezalel School, Jerusalem, repousee and etched brass frame.

pictured an entirely imaginary "oriental" past.

E.M. Lilien (1874 to 1925), one of the instructors inspired and imported to Jerusalem by Schatz to teach in the school, brought the Art Nouveau style with him from Vienna where it had already become established in Zionist publications.

The lofty artistic goals closest to

Continued

ART SCHOOL FOCUS SHIFTS TO CRAFTS

Continued

Schatz' heart were, however, to be almost immediately beset by a series of rather harsh social and economic realities. Late Ottoman Palestine was a backwater of a failing empire. Jerusalem in particular, historical associations and futuristic fantasy aside, had a high unemployment rate and little industry or trade.

Furthermore, the Jewish immigration promoted by the modern Zionist movement consisted mostly of poor and relatively unskilled Jews from Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

On the other hand, the individuals whom Schatz admired and identified as suitable teachers and creative artists were, like himself, acculturated cosmopolitans, accustomed to Western European ways and tastes. So too were all the principal financial supporters of the new Zionism and of its art school: wealthy bankers, merchants and professionals from Germany, France, England and America.

One consequence of the collision of these forces was a significant shift at the school. Conceived originally by Schatz as an academy for the generation of a new art, the school's focus was soon reconceptualized by its powerful fiscal backers as more suitably a school for crafts. Painting and sculpture were to be de-emphasized as subjects, in favor of carpet-weaving, jewelry manufacture and other decorative arts deemed potentially profitable for sale and export.



"One of the People of the Book" (1904) reduction c. 1925, in struck bronze, silvered, 70 x 45 mm.

Many of the distinguished artists (such as Lilien) who had been attracted by Schatz's concept of a future for Jewish artistic creativity were soon discouraged by the climate and backwardness of Jerusalem, by the region's economic hardship, by the unsophisticated students and by the downgrading of the artistic vision. Such individuals soon decamped back to Europe.

A third setback resulted from World War I which separated the once unified European supporters of Zionism into opposing national camps, while destroying much of the market for

Continued

MARKETING BEZALEL: HUGE COMMITMENT

Continued

luxury exports and tourist sales, and caused the Jerusalem area itself to become a battleground, its inhabitants and students now draftable as soldiers.

These unforeseen events meant that the Bezalel School, after a few exciting and creative years between 1906 and 1914, was shut down entirely for most of the war. Even when it reopened in 1919, the school was deprived both of the financial support of its former and principally German backers, as well as the artistic and economic optimism that had characterized the Belle Epoque.

For Schatz this was a harsh blow, but he was unwilling to relinquish his vision, and for the remainder of his life struggled tirelessly to preserve and advance the project he continued to believe was a national necessity.

Actually, Schatz had almost from the beginning of 1906 assigned himself the task of chief fundraiser for Bezalel. Rare was the year in which he did not make one or more trips abroad to cities of the world where Jews were concentrated.

His mission was complex. Schatz was the best known artist associated with the Bezalel enterprise and so his own artworks were promoted for sale at the traveling exhibitions of arts and crafts. These were mainly in the form of aftercast copies of his original



"Nathan Straus" (c. 1923) reduction, c. 1925, cast bronze, 94 x 70 mm. Straus was the owner of the Macy's department store chain and a philanthropist.

medallic plaques, often in full size: rectangles of about 12 by 24 inches.

However, these large and very fine castings, made mainly in Vienna, were quite costly. Smaller casts also were made, and further mechanical reductions of about 15 of the works were produced in Austria as uni-face strikings in bronze and silvered bronze.

In 1930, for example, these smaller struck works, 55 x 70 millimeters, were sold by Henry Seligmann, a dealer in Hanover, for 20 Marks apiece, while the medium-sized castings, 135 x 165 mm, cost 50 Marks.

Continued

SCHATZ HAD TO PURSUE MULTIPLE ROLES

Continued

Less fine reductions of Schatz' signature works were also produced locally in the Jerusalem workshops of Bezael as casts, in copper repousee, or as wood carvings.

Such items were available in the Museum shop, but most were sold at the traveling international exhibitions.

Schatz was also a painter and originals of his work were also offered, often set in decorative hammered brass frames designed by other instructors in the decorative arts an often executed by students under their supervision.

Professor Boris Schatz, as he was invariably called in the school's publicity and in its sales catalogs, also promoted the appreciation and sale of the wide variety of decorative arts that were the main products of Bezael: ritual objects, jewelry of semiprecious stones and filigree work, book covers, ceramics, lithographs, ivory and stone carvings and more.

Above all, however, Schatz was on the lookout for wealthy donors who might be inspired to support the school and its long term artistic goals. Paris, London, Berlin and New York were on his itinerary to be sure, but so too were Odessa, Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Cincinnati, Pittsburg and Denver. Such administrative, public relations and sales work were to preoccupy Schatz in the post-World War I years, while he resided in



"Joseph Trumpeldor" was one of the most popular medals created by Boris Schatz; original (1922); reduction c. 1925 in struck bronze, silvered, 70x43mm. The right-facing portrait of the war hero against the leftward pose of the lion is a deliberate act on the part of the artist, and creates an extraordinary dynamic tension within the piece that likely contributed to the medal's popular success.

Jerusalem and during his trips abroad, greatly reducing his personal artistic productivity.

However, before the war he had continued his production of genre types of the European ghettos, "Torah Scribe" (1912) and "Blowing the Shofar" (1914). And immediately

Continued

TEXT INCORPORATED INTO SCULPTURE

Continued

after the war, he undertook to commemorate several heroes of the nascent Zionist movement.

“Joseph Trumpeldor” (1922) is perhaps the most popular medal Schatz ever made, honoring a soldier who had lost an arm as an officer in the Russo-Japanese War, who then became an organizer of Jewish defense units in Palestine, and was killed with seven others in a 1921 skirmish with Arabs.

The plaque, an idealized portrait framed monumentally and also bearing the lion which was to appear on the hero’s actual stone memorial, was widely reproduced, becoming an icon of the newly vigorous Jewish presence in Palestine, suitable for private display in the homes of patriotic settlers and their supporters worldwide.

Another iconic figure memorialized by Schatz was “Eliezer ben Yehudah” (1922), the man credited with almost single-handedly adapting the ancient Hebrew language for modern usage, who compiled a massive dictionary and raised his daughter in Palestine to become the first exclusively Hebrew-speaking child in two millennia.

Schatz’s tombstone-shaped plaque which, appropriately enough, features more text than iconography, shows the scholar on his deathbed, and was based on a portrait sketched by Schatz in Ben Yehudah’s own home on the very night of his death. I learned this bit of history in 1972, directly from



“Eliezer Ben Yehuda” (1922) reduction c 1925, cast bronze, silvered, 164 x 83 mm.

the son of Schatz’s second marriage, whom he named Bezalel and who also was an artist in Jerusalem.

Schatz did many other portrait plaques, especially in his later years, often of other supporters of the Zionist cause, typically academics, artists and commercial or banking giants: “Solomon Schechter” (1913), President of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, “Nathan Straus” (c 1922), owner of the Macy’s depart-

Continued

THE STRUGGLE FOR BEZALEL SURVIVAL

Continued

ment store chain and a philanthropist.

A substantial number of these portraits were drawn while Schatz was on tour and his signature on the resulting plaques usually specifies, in Hebrew, the name of the place where the sitting occurred, whether it was New York, as in the two cases above, or Cincinnati, or Jerusalem.

His signature on plaques varied over the years, starting as B or Boris Chatz in Paris, then changing to the equivalent in Cyrillic in Bulgaria, and later to Boris Schatz, again in Latin letters during his very early Palestinian period.

Schatz thereafter signed his work in Hebrew, normally as a monogram involving various arrangements of three letters: B, Sh and Tz, the latter two taken together actually comprising the entirety of his name in its Hebrew form. Parenthetically, although the word "Schatz" means "treasure" in German and might appear to signify the same in its cognate, Yiddish, as a Jewish name, it is actually an acronym for a phrase indicating a cantor, a leader of the synagogue service.

Germany's hyperinflation of the early 1920s and the worldwide depression a few years later continued to erode the fiscal underpinnings of the Bezalel School which had never really regained its balance after the First World War. The school closed and re-opened on a shoestring budget late in the decade, and finally shut-

tered its doors, the victim of bankruptcy, in 1931.

Schatz himself never gave up hope of resurrecting his beloved enterprise. He continued wandering the globe in search of funds and died at age 66, on one of his typical journeys, in March 1932, in Denver, Colo.

What may be said of his legacy, of his personal artworks, and of his ambition to found a "School of Jewish Art," both literally and figuratively?

Schatz's attempt to found a "School of Art" was largely a failure. Some elements of the decorative arts promoted in the Bezalel School, metal-working skills and the use of elegant lettering, for example, significantly influenced later Israeli design values in medallic and other arts.

But the notion of developing a specific national "Jewish Art," so dear to Schatz's imagination, never was fully realized, nor did the school he found survive him.

To be sure, the name "Bezalel" was later revived and reapplied to an art school that survives in Israel today.

But Schatz's emphases on academic realism, romanticism, historical traditions and nationhood have not been maintained in this new Bezalel. Indeed, they are conspicuous by their absence, and their subordination to abstract international values that have come to dominate the world of art for the past half century.

Of his own work, both as a sculptor

Continued

ASSESSING SCHATZ, BEZALEL PROJECT

Continued

in bas relief and as a painter, Schatz was very much a man of his times, and not a man of the future. Throughout his life as an artist he remained an academic realist who imitated and virtually never transcended the models he encountered in his youth in late 19th century Vilna and Warsaw.

His conventional and sentimental approach to portraiture, to traditional and heroic types, is easily dismissed by modernists as characterized by bathos, and irrelevant to what art needed to accomplish and evolve into in the 20th century.

At the same time, the accessibility of Schatz's approach to persons with backgrounds similar to his, largely raised in artistically underprivileged circumstances, cannot be denied, nor should the pleasure of recognition and empathy that viewers of this type appear to have derived from such works be doubted.

Thus, it is fair to observe that, in common with many other popular pictorial traditions, his unsophisticated approach met with a degree of success in the marketplace, even if it was generally derided by professional artists, including many of his own trainees and successors in Israel.

Furthermore, his work did have some degree of influence in an area where Schatz declared that he wished to be influential: the embodiment and projection of a Jewish identity.

Immigrants to Palestine, refugees

from Eastern Europe, related to his representation of a world they themselves had abandoned and which was largely eradicated by the mid-20th century, and to some of the images of biblical and modern heroes that were to be part of the heritage upon which Israel was to be founded. □

Editor's Note: This article is based on a talk presented at the October 2004 FIDEM (Federation Internationale de la Medaille) meeting in Seixal, Portugal; and had previously been published in a slightly different form in Medailles 2005.

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THE HIDDEN KINGDOMS OF *ADIABENE*

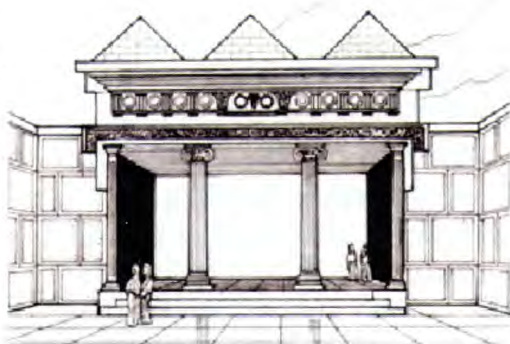
AN UPDATED REVIEW OF ITS COINAGE

BY HANS LOESCHNER

Adiabene in Mesopotamia, on the right bank of the river Tigris near the present-day borders of Iraq, Iran, and Turkey, was a Jewish kingdom in the first century of the Current Era.

Coins of Adiabene are extremely rare. David Hendin, author of the authoritative reference book *Guide to Biblical Coins*, told me recently that in the last 43 years he has seen only one example.

Within the realms of the Parthian Empire, Adiabene enjoyed a high level of independence. This kingdom was the only external power to support the Jews in their



*Reconstruction by Marvin Tameanko
A reconstruction of the Temple of Helen in
Jerusalem, circa 50 CE.*

First Revolt (66 to 70 CE) against the Roman Empire.

Among the most prominent of the Adiabenes: Queen Helena, wife of Monobazus I, who ad-

Continued

JEWISH KINGDOM THRIVES BRIEFLY

Continued

opted the Jewish religion, and was later joined by her son and ruler of Adiabene, Izates II (circa 36 to 50).

As noted by researcher Vesta Sarkhosh-Curtis in *Investiture during the Parthian Dynasty*, the “evidence for the

investiture of local kings by the Parthian king of kings appears in Josephus (*Antiquities of the Jews* 20.68), who describes that once the power of Artabanus was restored, Izates, the king of Adiabene, was given permission to wear his tiara upright and to sleep on a golden bed.”

The Parthians, nominally Zoroastrian, permitted existing cults and religious practices in their subordinated lands to continue. They also were tolerant towards the Jewish communities in Adiabene.

The Jews in the far western cities of Edessa and Nisibis repaid the Parthians by being among the most vigorous opponents of the Romans.

This was also the case when the Roman emperor Trajan (98 to



The image of a bronze coin of Monobazos I was published in the Fourth Edition of Hendin's book and was reproduced in the article "Adiabene, the ancient Jewish Kingdom, and its Coins" by Marvin Tameanko, The Shekel Vol. XXXVIII, No. 5, pp. 18-25 (Sept - Oct 2005).

117) conquered Mesopotamia and Assyria (including Adiabene) in 114 to 117.

Much Jewish blood was spilled by Trajan's legions. Their strong resistance led to Trajan's setback and subsequent death (probably as a consequence of a heat stroke during the siege of Hatra).

Trajan's successor Hadrian (117 to 138) adopted a more pacific foreign policy, and the Romans withdrew to the Euphrates frontiers again. But there was a significant exception to this policy with the harsh Roman reaction to the second Jewish revolt (132 to 136).

Under Bar Kokhba

Another bronze coin of Adiabene was initially attributed to the hypothetical city of "Atusia in

Continued

ANCIENT COINS CONFIRM HISTORY

Continued

Assyria" (at this time Adiabene), situated at the river "Kapro," a tributary of the Tigris (symbolized by an arrow). These coins are also extremely rare.

In 1962, Józef Tadeusz Milik located four of these coins: The piece in the British Museum cited previously, two from Nisibis and the fourth from the Cabinet des Médailles, Paris.

Comparing the inscriptions on these four examples, Milik corrected the reading of the city name from Atusia to Natounia.

This is confirmed by a fifth example which by chance was recently acquired together with a coin of the autonomous Greek city Seleucia and Tigrim, issued during a long (36 to 43 CE) revolt against the Parthian Empire.

The style of the Natounia and Seleucia and Tigrim coins are very similar. Thus, in contrast to the previous attribution to the first century BCE, the coin of Natounia might be allocated to the first half of the first century



At left: Statue of Atalu.

Above, center: A bronze coin (14-15 mm diameter, 2.4 grams) struck in city Natounia, kingdom of Adiabene. Obv: Head of turreted city goddess to right. Rev: Arrow at left and palm-branch, both directed upward. Greek inscription (starting at 10h): NATOVN(P)EΩN T(ΩN IPOΣ TON) KAIIPON.

CE, during the time of the Jewish kingdom of Adiabene.

In his article, Milik pointed to an impressive marble statue of a king, wearing a high tiara. This statue was excavated in 1951 in the ancient city of Hatra, located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The inscription on this statue is transcribed as "Image of Atalu, king of royal Natounia."

Erected in the early third century CE by Atalu, king of Adiabene, the statue pays homage to the supreme deity Beelshamen (Baal-Shamin: Sky God).

The desert city Hatra might have been dependent on the kingdom of Adiabene as the Parthian emperor Artabanus II (10 to 38

Continued

MULTIPLE KINGDOMS CODEPENDENT

Continued

CE) rewarded Izates II with an extension of territory to include Nisibis, located north-west of Hatra. (Please see map on next page.)

A later writer, Theodoret, mentions Adiabene as “belonging to the Parthians, but now called Osrhoene.” In about 100 CE, the king of Edessa (capital of Osrhoene) is said to have purchased his state from the Parthian Pacorus II (circa 78 to 105).

In the early third century CE the kingdom of Edessa (possibly at that time extending to Nisibis) joined forces with the Romans and issued coins with the image of the Roman emperor on the obverse and of the Osrhoene king on the reverse.

On these coins the kings of Edessa wear an upright Parthian tiara. (Edessa became a Christian kingdom in the second century CE. Abgar the Great was the first to issue coins with the cross on his tiara.)

The main city of Adiabene was Arbela, the present city of Erbil, occupied at least since 6,000



Above: Map of the region in the first century CE. Adiabene cities Hatra, Nisibis and Edessa are marked. Below: A bronze coin (13 mm, 3.1 g) of Seleucia ad Tigrim, from revolt against Parthians 36 to 43 CE. Obv: Head of turreted city goddess; Rev: Nike advancing to left, holding palm-branch, below date (Seleucid era, started 312 BC) in Greek letters ANT (1 50 300), equivalent to 39/40 CE.



BCE, thus making it one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities.

Probably the Adiabene nation lost its Jewish character during the time of the Roman onslaught under Trajan, circa 115 CE.

Continued

SINGLE COINS WITH MULTIPLE RULERS

Two bronze coins of the Kingdom of Edessa (Osroene) issued during the reign of Roman emperor Septimius Severus (193 to 211 CE), one of the most prolific coiners of all Roman emperors. The coins were struck during the concurrent reign of King Abgar VIII the Great (179 to 214 CE). Top: Severus at left, Abgar at right, 21 mm, 7.3 grams. At right: Same style but at 19 mm and 3.2 grams. The Greek inscription is the same on both: Obv: CEOVEPOC CEB AVTOKPATΩP. Rev: ABΓAΠOC BACIAEC.



Silver drachm (23/24 mm diameter, 3.7 grams) of Ardashir, from 206 CE ruler of Ishtaks, from 208 CE ruler of Persis; he overthrew the Parthian empire 223/4 to 226, ruled until 240 and died in 242.

Continued

Christianity gained influence as outlined in the *Chronicle of Erbil*, which began listing bishops early in the second century CE.

In 216 CE, Caracalla (209 to 217), eldest son of Septimius Severus, burned the entire valley of Adiabene and even looted the old royal tombs of Arbela.

From 223 or 224 to 226, Ardashir, the ruler of Persis and Ishtaks, defeated the weakened Parthians and founded the mighty Sasanian Empire.

In 226, Adiabene became a province of the new empire, and this situation prevailed until the Arabian conquest in the seventh century.

Continued

ANCIENT HISTORY BROUGHT TO LIFE

At right: A recent photo shows part of the reconstructed walls of the ancient fortress of Arbela in the city of Erbil.

Below: A recent aerial view of the town of Erbil with the remnants of the ancient Arbela fortress front and center.



Continued

Between the fifth and 14th centuries, Adiabene was seat of a metropolitan bishop of the Assyrian Church of the East.

The Jewish communities in the Sasanian Empire still were important and influential. As outlined by Marvin Tameanko in "Vahran V, AD 420-438, a Jewish Sasanian King," *The Shekel* (Jan - Feb

2000) Yazdgard I (399 to 420) married Soshandukt (Soshana), daughter of the Exilarch of the Babylonian Jews. □

The support of Dr. Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis, Coin Department of The British Museum, for providing copies of her publications and the photo of the Hatra statue is greatly appreciated. Thanks also are due David Hendin for providing valuable information.

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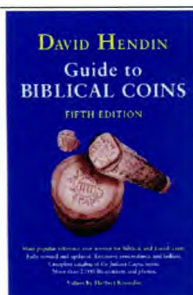
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DEFINING VISION

Paul Vincze Judaic medals capture attention



Images courtesy Stack's
A 1967 Bar Kokhba-Beitar Fortress medal obverse depicts an ancient Jewish trumpeter blowing the Shofar. A tetradrachm of Bar Kokhba also is depicted.

Medal in .875 fine gold,
57.5 millimeters,
96.1 grams.
Price realized: \$3,750.50
(includes buyer's fee).

The auction of 20 Judaic medals by medallic sculptor Paul Vincze at the New York International Numismatic Convention (NYINC) in January 2011 presented for sale some of the prolific artist's most mature designs.

Prices realized for the auction totalled more than \$48,000.

Significantly, the medals also represent landmark events in the history of both ancient Judaea and modern Israel.

Continued

Vincze medals wow NYINC auction



Images courtesy Stack's
The 1968 20th Anniversary of the Founding of the modern state of Israel medal depicts David slaying Goliath on the obverse. The reverse has a relief map contrasting Israel's borders in 1948 and 1968. Medal in .875 fine gold, 57.4 millimeters, 89.8 grams. Price realized: \$3,450 (includes buyer's fee).

Continued

Born in Galgagyork, Hungary on Aug. 15, 1907, Vincze was raised in an artistic family, the son of a Jewish father and a Catholic mother. He studied at the High School of Arts and Crafts in Budapest. An early interest in sculpture resulted

in a seven-year tenure at the studio of Ede Telcs, an acclaimed medallic sculptor and teacher at the High School of Arts and Crafts. At age 28, Vincze won a scholarship to study in Rome, where his

Continued

Medals chronicle Eretz Yisrael milestones



Images courtesy Stack's
 The 1967 Exodus-Ingathering of Exiles medal portrays rejoicing Jewish refugees with their meager possessions on the obverse with an inscription from Exodus. The reverse shows an endless procession on a beach approaching a steamship that will take them to Eretz Yisrael.
 Medal in .9166 fine gold, 57.4 mm, 96.8 grams.
 Price realized: \$3,737.50 (includes buyer's fee).

Continued

work was influenced by Classical design. Vincze returned briefly to Hungary and entered a design for a new 2-pengo coin. His winning design of ancient archer was set aside in favor of another coin design by non-Jewish artist (and director of the

State Mint) Lajos Berán. The increasing persecution of Jews forced Vincze to leave Hungary. He settled in England, became a British citizen in 1948 and established a studio in Chelsea.

Vincze would soon earn international recognition, and a huge increase in com-

Continued

History through art, medallic sculpture



Images courtesy Stack's
 The 1964 Masada-Ancient Shekel medal portrays a view of the ancient fortress on the obverse; the reverse has a recreation of an ancient Shekel with "Shekel of Israel" inscribed around, and "Year 5" above the chalice, in ancient Hebrew.

Medal in .9166 fine gold,
 52.2 mm, 97.9 grams.
 Price realized: \$4,025
 (includes buyer's fee).

Continued

missioned medallic art with the failure of the British government to commission official state medals for the June 2, 1953, coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.

Numerous medallic sculptors and private mints entered an ad hoc competition

to commemorate the Queen's coronation. Vincze's portraits of the new queen were adjudged to be clearly heads above all others and earned him international acclaim, effectively launching his prolific career.

In the late 1950s and early 1960s,

Continued

The eternal spirit of the Western Wall



Images courtesy Stack's
 The obverse of Vincze's 1967 medal depicts a straightaway view of the Temple in Jerusalem built by Herod; below is the Temple Menorah and Table of Shewbread as depicted on a bronze coin of Antigonus Matathias (c. 37 BCE). The reverse features an aerial view of the Temple complex above, and the Western Wall below.
 Medal in .999 fine gold.
 56.6 mm; 90.1 grams.
 Price realized: \$4,025.00
 (includes buyer's fee).

Continued

Vincze designed coins for several small nations and nation-states in Europe and Africa, including Guernsey, Malawi, Ghana and, earlier in the 1950s, for the King of Libya.

Following the coronation of Queen

Elizabeth II, Vincze's style continued to evolve, maturing into what some art critics have praised as a Renaissance style.

The maturation of his medallic portraiture (Vincze also created large bronze bas-relief plaques) which captured significant

Continued

“I have set watchmen upon thy walls ...”



Images courtesy Stack's
The 1967 Watchmen on the Walls
of Jerusalem commemorates Israeli
Defense Forces.

Obverse: IDF emblem against the
walls of the Old City with a Biblical
quote from Isaiah.

Reverse: An Israeli Defense Forces
soldier stands watch over the newly
unified Old City of Jerusalem.

Medal in .875 fine gold;

57.6 mm; 90.1 grams.

Price realized: \$3,450.00

(including buyer's fee)



Continued

moments in history or critical personality traits of world leaders resulted in additional commissions and great financial success. Vincze married a French woman, Emillienne “Betty” Chauzeix in 1958, and established a second studio near Nice.

Many world leaders were willing to sit for Vincze, including Sir Winston Churchill, President Harry Truman, Pope Paul VI, Prince Karim Aga Khan and Queen Elizabeth II. Other medal commissions included the full Zodiac, all the

Continued

Vincze had “vision ...” of a nation builder



Image courtesy Stack's
The 1966 David Ben-Gurion
80th Birthday Medal por-
trays the civil bust of Ben-
Gurion, facing left. Above:
the medal's reverse portrays
a seated worker with a pick
and books.

Medal in .999 fine gold,
57.7 mm, 96.7 grams.
Price realized: \$4,312.50
(including buyer's fee).



Continued

plays of Shakespeare, Catholic saints, space exploration, numismatic scholars, as well as British and American history.

Of greatest interest to *The Shekel* readers, though, are Vincze's numerous Judaic medals, which include two official com-

missioned Israel State Medals.

The Stack's auction of 20 of Vincze's Judaic medals represented various sizes of seven designs: Biblical, with medals on ancient Jewish history including Bar Kokhba and Masada; modern subjects in-

Continued

Vincze attention to art, history evident



*Image at top courtesy Mel Wacks
Image at left courtesy Stack's*

*Above: A self-portrait medal created by Paul Vincze on the occasion of his 70th birthday.
At left: The reverse of the 1967 Bar Kokhba-Beitar Fortress medal features a stylized depiction of the hilltop fortress of Beitar.*

Continued

cluding statesman David Ben Gurion and the 20th anniversary of the founding of the modern state of Israel, and medals that bring the ancient and modern together, including the Western Wall and Judaea in Bondage-Israel in Freedom.

Among Vincze's many commissions were medals for the Jewish American Hall of Fame and the American Jewish Historical Society.

Vincze died at age 86 at his summer home in Magagnosc, France on March 5, 1994. □

Salt



Earth

BY ANDREW PERALA

DEAD SEA COINS SPAN MILLENNIA



Images courtesy IsrealMint.org

The Dead Sea is the central image on the reverse of a series of coins commemorating the 63rd anniversary of the founding of the modern state of Israel. Struck in gold and silver, the 1-shekel, 2- and 10-sheqalim denominations also depict an ibex, an indigenous mountain goat, on the reverse. The obverse of all three denominations bears legends in the three official languages of Israel - Hebrew, Arabic and English - and a reflection of the denomination as though reflected by the water of the Dead Sea.

For at least 10,000 years, the Dead Sea has attracted people, focusing their attention on a hypersaline body of water with no fish and no potential for irrigating crops.

Even its water tastes bad, and is so salty that it's undrinkable.

The bulk of the salt in the Dead Sea isn't fare for the table - sodium chloride - but magnesium chloride, which gives the water a bitter taste.

A harsh place, more arid than the surrounding desert, the Dead Sea seems to acknowledge its inhospitable

landscape, evaporating at the rate of almost a meter per year.

Yet, a few miles north, the city of Jericho - fabled for its tumbling walls - attracted a community more than 10 millennia ago.

Long before there were walls around Jericho, the town was a trading center for salt from the Dead Sea, according to Mark Kurlansky's encyclopedic history of the only mineral crystal we eat, *Salt*.

Archaeologists have found evidence of "sedentary" people in the region building underground oval-

Continued

REGION SETTLED 10,000 YEARS AGO



Seen from space, the Dead Sea rift valley is clearly visible as is the curvature of the earth, the Sea of Galilee as well as the lands of Israel and others.

Continued

shaped stone homes thousands of years before humans settled into a major advance in human civilization: the seasonal planting and harvesting known as farming.

According to a controversial theory, a catastrophic flooding of the Black Sea basin by waters of the Mediterranean took place around 5,600 BCE. Even if that even did occur, there were people living near the Dead Sea long before.

Indeed, Jericho was a pillar of the region's salt trade 6,000 years before the pyramids were built. The salt of the Dead Sea attracts flocks of people still.

With the borders of four governments laying claim to Dead Sea shorelines, more than a million tourists, including many Israelis, are estimated to visit each year.

In many ways, the Dead Sea tran-

scends ancient rifts of the Middle East, perhaps because the Dead Sea (and the Sea of Galilee) exist in large part because they are astride a massive tectonic rift.

Tel Aviv University's Minerva Dead Sea Research Center notes that the ancient body of water "is located at the center of the Dead Sea rift, a large feature (extending) 1,000 km from the southern tip of the Sinai . . . to Turkey (and) is the most prominent tectonic feature in the Middle East."

The area's resorts (including a casino popular with Israeli visitors, according to Israeli media) offer visitors diversions like the chance to bob unsinkably on the water and perhaps find relief from painful skin diseases like psoriasis.

To honor the 63rd anniversary of the founding of the modern State

Continued

DEAD SEA'S EXTRAORDINARY WATERS



Bathers float on the hypersaline waters of the Dead Sea.

Continued

of Israel, the government authorized the release of the 2011 Dead Sea commemorative coin series in 1-shekel, 2-sheqalim and 10-sheqalim denominations.

All the coins feature an astronaut's view of the Dead Sea on the reverse, with an ibex (an indigenous mountain goat) in the foreground.

The obverse sides of the coins feature legends in three languages. The denomination is mirrored as though reflected by Dead Sea waters.

The Dead Sea thrives today with an abundance of trade in tourism and minerals. Its history began millennia before the advent of writing, agriculture, the pyramids, perhaps even the Black Sea flood.

The region is home to vitally important sites ranging from the oldest city on earth to the location of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Qumran Library.

More modern discoveries like the existence of the truly ancient

Lake Lisan that once nearly filled the entire valley, as well as recently uncovered synagogues, a Crusader's fort and a Caliph's palace, all emphasize the Dead Sea as a region of historic and spiritual importance to many. □

2011 Dead Sea

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Planchet: .925 fine silver
Weight: 28.8 grams
Mintage: 5,000
- NIS 1-shekel
Mintmark: Star of David
Diameter: 30 millimeters
Planchet: .925 fine silver
Weight: 14.4 grams
Mintage: 1,800

LOVE TOKENS

Roman lettering common, Hebrew far more rare

BY SIMCHA KURITZKY

One of the disadvantages of living in the "Information Age" is that you get the impression there is nothing new to collect or research. Of course, that represents an attitude, not a fact. You can stumble across a new area of numismatic expertise if you leave yourself sufficiently open to it. So it was with me and Hebrew love tokens, or engraved coins.

Coins have been engraved for a variety of reasons: satire, souvenir, talisman, or memento of a loved one. Only the latter can truly be called a "love token," and

these are the most common pieces, typically smoothed on one side and engraved with someone's initials or name on a silver or gold coin of 1850 to 1910.

These were primarily an English fad. Host coins generally were from the United States or the British Empire, though some pieces show up from Germany and the Low Countries. Hence inscriptions are in the Roman (English) alphabet; those in non-Roman letters are quite rare.

Tokens bearing Hebrew letters would

Continued

TOKENS BEAR REVERED LANGUAGE



Images courtesy The Numismatist

An 1875 U.S. Seated Liberty dime has had its reverse smoothed with the Hebrew letter heh inscribed boldly in the center. The single letter has great meaning.

Continued

have been engraved for a special reason: Hebrew is revered by Jews as the language of the Bible, and it came to be respected by many Christians and pagans as well.

A typical love token indicates a desire to bring two souls together by a tangible gift; a Hebrew love token indicates a desire to bring one's soul closer to God or divine forces.

Although every love token is unique, the inscriptions on them are not. The only Hebrew inscription I have seen on multiple coins is the letter heh (ה) usually on U.S. dimes and gold dollars. This single letter stands for one of God's names, and it appeared on Western European amulets a century ago.

The Bible uses many names for God, but considered the holiest is the Tetra-

grammaton, the name of four letters - yud heh vov heh (יהוה). Out of respect for the sanctity of this name, it is split by a hyphen. After the Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 C.E., the rabbis of the Talmud declared that only the High Priest had known the proper pronunciation, and even he spoke it only once a year. Pious Jews often refer to it simply as HaShem ("the Name"), and often write it as just the initial letter heh.

Over the years, I've purchased half a dozen such tokens. One of them is modeled after a true love token. In addition to a large heh, this U.S. Type 1 gold dollar, struck between 1849 and 1854, is inscribed on the reverse with small, cursive initials I.A.L. and the date 1915. Perhaps it was intended as a birth commemorative or as an amulet to protect a newborn.

Continued

LOVE TOKENS TYPICALLY GIFTS OF HEART



Images courtesy The Numismatist
A U.S. 3-dollar gold coin is framed in a gold bezel with intricate filigree. The coin's obverse retains the Indian Head image; the reverse has been smoothed and carries an inscription in Hebrew that translates as "God will bless you and guard you." The date of the coin is unknown but 3-dollar gold coins were issued by the U.S. only from 1854 to 1889.



Continued

I have seen only one other true love token with Hebrew, a \$3 gold piece (minted from 1854 to 1889) mounted in a large, gold bezel. The reverse was polished and engraved with Yev erekhekha HaShem Vayishmerekha ("God will bless you and

guard you"), the opening verse of the Priestly Benediction (*Numbers* 6:24). Based on the inscription, the recipient probably was the daughter of a koheyn, the priestly family descended from Aaron. Two letter yuds represent the name of God, a substitution that has been used by

Continued

HEBREW TOKENS DEEPLY SYMBOLIC



Images courtesy The Numismatist

A U.S. 1856 1-dollar gold coin has been smoothed and engraved on the obverse to portray the Hebrew letter heh. The single letter stands for one of God's names.

Continued

Jews for centuries. In the center are the initials E and I, superimposed and ornate. Below is the date 1892 and VON B & J.S. ("Von" is the German word for "from.") Many Jews who arrived in the United States in the middle of the 19th century spoke German, so B & J.S. likely were the commissioners of this piece.

One particularly striking love token I bought on the Internet is a gold 1909 Indian Head quarter eagle (for \$212) with a pin soldered to the reverse. The obverse is unchanged; on the reverse, the name *Shaday* (שדי) is engraved and filled with blue enamel.

Shaday first appears in *Genesis* 17:1 when God makes His covenant with Avram. The name also is used in blessings and requests for offspring and good harvests. It has long been considered a

powerful protection against attackers - human and demon - and is placed on the mezuzah, a small, decorative box holding Biblical verses placed on door frames per *Deuteronomy* 6:9. The name is engraved on the inside, or hidden area, of the pin; apparently the owner didn't want anyone to know he or she was wearing an amulet!

My other love token with the name Shaday is the first Hebrew-engraved coin I bought. A very long and complicated inscription is engraved on the reverse of an 1866 Gothic florin of Great Britain. Around the top, the inscription begins with Shaday; included twice is *Ehvi Valar* (אהוי ולר), which could be the *notarikon* (initial letters) of *Genesis* 2:10 "[A river watered] the garden, and from there it parted and became four heads." The rivers of Eden often are found on Hebrew

Continued

HEBREW TOKENS SEEK DIFFERENT LINK



Images courtesy The Numismatist

A British Gothic florin, date unknown, carries a long and involved inscription on the reverse with references to Eden, Psalm 91 and phrases from the daily Jewish liturgy.

Continued

amulets, and the fact that there are four of them parallels the four letters forming several of the names on this amulet.

The next name in the top inscription is *Yohakh* (יהך), the last letters of the first four words of *Psalm 91:11* *kiy malakhav yitzaveh lakh lishmarkha bkhoh dirakhekha* ("For He will command His angels to guard you in all your journeys").

Aglah (אגלא) appears in the penultimate position of the top inscription, as well as to the right of the central names. *Aglah* is the notarikon of the phrase from the daily Jewish liturgy, *Atah gibor leyolam Adonay* ("You are strong eternally, Lord"). Since the early Renaissance, both Jews and Christians popularly used the name *Aglah* as a charm against fires.

At the end of the top inscription, and also in the very center of the amulet, is the actual Tetragrammaton (יהוה). Above and below is *Kuzu* (כוזו), which medieval Jews

invented by *temura*, a method of substitution in which each letter is replaced by the following letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Scribes often write *Kuzu* on the backs of mezuzah scrolls along with *Bamukhaz*, the *temura* for *Eloheynu* ("our God"). While *Bamukhsaz* does not appear on this amulet, at the bottom is *Takhsisa* (טכסיסה), which could be *Eloheynu* created by a related process called *eyk bakhar*. In *eyk bakhar* the letters are grouped into nine "houses," based on their *gematria* (numeric values). The first house has letters valued 1, 10 and 100; the second has 2, 20, 200; etc. To get *Takhsisa*, each letter is left alone or replaced by a letter from the prior or next house.

To the left of the central names is *Azriel* (עזריאל), which literally means "help of God." This and many other angel names commonly are found on medieval Jewish amulets. Above each word is a triangle of

Continued

HEBREW-STYLE TOKEN'S MAGIC LINKS



Images courtesy The Numismatist
 An amulet for the Sun, taken directly from an 1801 book on Occult Philosophy, likely was created for magical purposes, perhaps by a Christian Hebraist. The host coin likely was British copper penny of the type minted between 1810 and 1860 and is engraved on both sides with symbols for the sun as well as a numerologically based system of magic.

Continued

three dots, which often is found in 19th-century books on magic. They are similar to a Christian Kabalist symbol - three Hebrew letter yuds in a triangle - representing the Trinity.

My guess is that this piece was created as an amulet by a gentile, either a Christian Hebraist or a member of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. (Founded as a mystical group by high-ranking Freemasons in 1888, this organization is the

source of many of the previously mentioned books on magic.)

This last piece was, without a doubt, made by gentiles for magical purposes. The host coin likely is a British copper penny of the type minted from 1810 to 1860. It was engraved on both sides with the amulet for the sun, taken directly from Francis Barrett's 1801 book *The Magus*. A magic square is placed at the center of the engraving; below is the circle-and-dot

Continued

SOME BEAR ANCIENT NAMES OF ANGELS

Continued

symbol for the sun, and above is the letter vov (ו). Reading counterclockwise from the top one finds *Nakhiel* (נכיאֵל), who is the "Intelligence of the Sun," the number 666, heh alef (הא), and God's name Eloah (אלה).

The "magic" in the square has to do with its size and numbers. In this case, each side of the large square is composed of six squares, which is the gematria of vov and the name heh (spelled heh alef). There are 36 squares in total, the numeric value of the name Eloah. All the numbers in the magic square add up to 666. The sum of each row, column and diagonal is 111, the gematria of Nakhiel.

Grammatically, the name Eloah is the singular of Elohim, which is both one of the most common names of God in the Bible and a reference to pagan gods. The name here was spelled without a vov, so it has the value 36. Only three Biblical verses use this defective spelling. On the reverse of the amulet are the seals of the sun and of his spirit. Barrett, the author of the 1801 book on occult philosophy, claims that when this table is engraved on a plate of pure gold, the wearer is rendered renowned, amiable and equal to a king. He doesn't say what happens when it is engraved on a copper penny and used as a pocket piece.

As you can see, there is a surprising diversity of material out there, even in a field as limited as Hebrew-language love tokens. Inscriptions run the gamut from a single letter to a complex set of names.

Source coins can be of copper, silver or gold, and sizes range from tiny to mid-size. They can take a variety of forms, from charms and pendants to pins and pocket pieces. Obviously, there are new things to collect if you keep your eyes open. □

Learn More

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This article is an adapted reprint of an article that first ran in the October 2003 issue of *The Numismatist*. All token photos are by John Nebel.

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Visions of

Israel



Part One - 1958 to 1961

BY MEL WACKS

Top: Israel's 1958 5-lirot commemorative coin - the nation's first - honored the country's 10th anniversary with a stylized menorah. The 1959 5-lirot commemorative coin celebrated the "Ingathering of Exiles" with the joyous hora dance that leaves room for others to join in.

Israel's first commemorative coin was issued in 1958 on the 10th Anniversary of Independence. The design was simple, yet powerful — a seven-branch menorah (candelabrum) portrayed stylistically by designer Miriam Karoli. The coin's surfaces were concave,

presenting a unique depth with a sparkling luster unlike any other world coin issued up to that time. For nearly 20 years Israel's annual Independence Anniversary commemoratives featured concave surfaces — until the "Israel Bonds" issue of 1975.

Continued

REMOVE PVC FROM COMMEMORATIVES

Continued

I would love to see Israel return to the concave shapes that made Israel's Independence coins so popular with collectors — both Jewish and non-Jewish alike.

Before reviewing the exceptionally designs of Independence commemorative coins issued from 1958 to 1974, it's essential to say a few words about the true rarity of these coins. These coins were sold by the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation and packaged in attractive inscribed soft plastic holders that included certificates of authenticity.

These holders, though, contain the chemical PVC (the plastic polyvinylchloride). PVC can damage coins over time, causing "PVC damage," which looks like green goo. This goo is extremely corrosive and, if left untreated, can destroy coins.

Early PVC damage can be removed with acetone. More severe PVC damage can corrode a coin's surfaces, causing permanent damage. If any of your Israel coins are still in their original soft holders — **GET THEM OUT!** If they are sticky or greenish, wipe the surfaces gently with cotton swabs dipped in acetone, then



A 1958 poster "Visit Israel - 10th Anniversary of Independence" by Miriam Karoli.

rinsed the coins with clean water (distilled water is best) and then gently blot dry with a towel. Do not rub the coins at all - this action also can damage the surfaces.

Then put the coin in a non-PVC two-inch by two-inch coin "flip" that you can buy at a local coin dealer.

Continued

PVC DAMAGE:

Before and after photos of a 1924 U.S. five-cent coin with PVC residue at left, and at right, after cleaning. Despite the services of a professional coin-restoration service, the PVC pitting is visible and permanent.

Images courtesy Numismatic Conservation Services



EARLY COIN DESIGNS EXCEPTIONAL



The menorah is depicted prominently on the Arch of the Roman Emperor Titus, above.

Continued

The number of coins permanently damaged by PVC, mishandled by unsophisticated collectors and non-collectors, and last-but-not-least the great numbers melted because the value of the silver (currently almost \$30 U.S. for each 25 gram, .900 fine silver coin) is more than the collector value is impossible to calculate. But the fact is this: the number of high-quality specimens among the early Israel commemorative coins makes them truly rare — and this fact could well be reflected in higher values in the future.

But now back to those first 16 exceptionally designed Israel Independence Anniversary commemorative coins.

The Menorah design on the first (1958/5718) Independence Anniversary coin was adopted as the logo of the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corpora-



Image courtesy Goldberg's Coins
The menorah was a central design element on the exceptionally rare prutah issued in 37 B.C.E. by King Antigonus Mattathias. This specimen sold for more than \$67,000 in a 2007 Goldberg's auction.

tion (now the Israel Coins and Medals Corp.). It was first described in the Book of Exodus (25:31-32), when the Lord described a holy object to be made for the Temple: "And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same. And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the candlestick out

Continued

IMAGES OF CELEBRATION ABOUND



Images courtesy Israel Coin & Medals Corporation

The 1959 5-lirot commemorative coin honors the "Ingathering of Exiles" with a design that features 11 dancers (one for each year of independence) dancing the hora — representing the joy of those who have already entered the Land. The circle is broken to indicate there is room for more.

Continued

of the one side, and three branches of the candle stick out of the other side."

Mintages were 97,901 in Brilliant Uncirculated condition and 2,000 in Proof. Official issue prices were \$4.50 and \$9, respectively.

The Mother of Israel Numismatics, Sylvia Haffner Magnus, wrote in *Israel's Money and Medals* (1973): "The 1958 five-lirot are distinguished from the regular strikes by their highly polished planchets, the white frost (matte) on all raised inscriptions and the menorah, and by the sharp arms of the menorah which are deeply outlined, whereas the regular strike has round arms. The centre of the obverse will have a true mirror surface and will not contain the cross with rays, appearing on the regular strike. There have been attempts to buff the coin (even by official agencies to make it look like a Proof. These are readily detected. This

is the rarest coin of the commemorative series in TRUE PROOF condition. It is estimated about 500 coins still exist in true Proof condition after the buffing and impairment)."

The "Menorah" side of the coin is actually the reverse (or "tails" side). The obverse (or "heads" side) features (1) the name of the country—Israel—in the three official languages of the country—Hebrew, English and Arabic, (2) the date in the Common Era (1958) and the year according to the Jewish calendar (5718), and (3) the denomination "5 Israeli Lirot" in Hebrew.

For the 11th Anniversary of Independence (1959/5719), Israel issued a coin commemorating the "Ingathering of the Exiles."

The *Encyclopedia of Judaism* describes the Prophetic concept of the Ingathering of the Exiles in the Pentateuch (Deut.

Continued

JOY AT FOUNDING OF ISRAEL

Continued

30:3-5) as the “gathering together” of Israel’s scattered remnants, and their restoration to prosperity in the ancestral homeland by an act of divine intervention.

From the era of the Babylonian Exile (Sixth century B.C.E.), this concept was developed and intensified, equating exile (galut) with

homelessness and the Land of Israel with spiritual as well as physical restoration.

Prophetic literature is imbued with such hopes and beliefs, which also make their appearance in Jewish eschatology.

According to Isaiah, the banished captives of Israel and the dispersed exiles of Judah will be assembled ‘from the four corners of the earth’ (11:11-12; cf. 43:5-6, 56:7-8). Jeremiah likewise foretells this process of national restoration (16:14-15, 23:7-8), when the exiles will be gathered from all their lands of banishment (29:14, 31:8ff., 32:37). Ezekiel similarly reiterates these promises (20:41, 34:13, 37:21), specifically linking them to the Jewish people’s religious obligations (11:17-20).

In the Talmudic era, this Ingathering of the Exiles became a full-fledged Jewish concept, ‘equal in significance to the day on which heaven and earth were created’ (Pes. 88a). After the Second Temple’s destruction and the exile of the Jews, it was apparent that the dream of an ‘Ingathering’ would be far harder to realize.



A 1948 newspaper photograph captured the joy of Israeli soldiers dancing the hora in celebration of the establishment of the free and independent State of Israel.

That dream therefore became associated in rabbinic thought with prayers for the Return to Zion, faith in the coming of the Mashiach, and an unshaken belief in Israel’s final Redemption.

The notion of kibbutz galuyyot remained a deeply cherished hope which found expression throughout the Jewish liturgy. ‘Bring us in peace from the four corners of the earth and lead us proudly to our land’ is a phrase in the Ahavah Rabbah prayer, while the tenth benediction of the weekday Amidah implores God to ‘sound the great ram’s horn for our freedom, raise the banner to assemble our exiles, and gather us together from the four corners of the earth.’ Similar statements can be found in many other portions of the liturgy.

Kibbutz galuyyot became a central Zionist concept, enshrined in Israel’s Declaration of Independence. The mass immigration (aliyah) of Jews from over 100 lands of exile, which began in 1948, was regarded by some as the first stage of

Continued

HEROIC ACTION, PEOPLE HONORED



Image courtesy ICMC

The 1960 5-lira commemorative coin marking Israel's 12th Anniversary of Independence honored the 100th birthday of Theodor Herzl with a stunning use of the portrait of Herzl.

Continued

this prophecy's fulfillment.”

From 1948 to 1951, 687,624 Jews immigrated to Israel, and from 1952 to 1960, there were 687,624 additional Jewish immigrants. A total of almost 3 million Jews have immigrated to Israel since its establishment as the Jewish Homeland.

The Ingathering coin features eleven dancers (one for each year of independence) doing the hora — representing the joy of those who have already entered the Land. The circle is broken to indicate there is room for more.

The obverse design is identical with the 1958 commemorative, except the dual dates are “1948-1959” in the Common Era and “5708-5719” for the Jewish Years. Miriam Karoli was the designer.

Bill Rosenblum writes in one of his catalogs: “Karoly [her name sometimes appears also with this spelling] was a sculptor, painter and graphic artist who did a number of coins, medals and stamps. She was born in Vienna in 1926 and died in 1964.”

Mintages of the 11th Anniversary of Independence coins were 27,059 in brilliant uncirculated and 4,721 in proof; issue prices were \$4.50 and \$9, respectively. Sylvia Haffner Magnus wrote: “All of this issue is found with scratches and abrasions. A gem specimen is truly rare.”

The 100th Anniversary of the birth of Theodor Herzl, the “Father of Modern Zionism” was celebrated on Israel's third Independence Anniversary commemorative coin. His birthday is featured on the obverse dates “1860-1960” in the Common Era and “5620-5720” according to the Jewish calendar. Except for the dates, the obverse design was identical to the 1958 and 1959 Independence coins (as created by Miriam Karoli).

The reverse design (by Andre Lasserre) is unusual, because it does not feature a large portrait of Herzl, as one might expect — rather, it is a smallish portrait contained in an incuse rectangle with rounded sides along with the Hebrew inscription “It is no legend,” which is an excerpt from

Continued

GOLD COMMEMORATIVES ALSO ISSUED



Images courtesy ICMC

Andre Lasserre created the designs for the 1962 Chaim Weizmann commemorative coin, in gold above left, and the 1974 David Ben-Gurion commemorative, above right in gold.

Continued

Herzl's prophetic words: "If you will it, it is no legend." A tiny coat-of-arms of the State of Israel precedes the quote. Mintages were 34,322 in brilliant uncirculated and 4,867 in proof; issue prices were \$4.50 and \$9, respectively.

Andre Lasserre created somewhat similar designs for the 1962 Chaim Weizmann commemorative gold coins and the 1974 David Ben-Gurion commemorative silver coins — all struck at the Berne Mint, Switzerland.

The following is a portion of the biographical information found at the website of the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (www.mfa.gov.il):

"In 1894, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French army, was unjustly accused of treason, mainly because of the prevailing Anti-Semitic atmosphere. Herzl witnessed mobs shouting "Death to the Jews." He resolved that there was only

one solution to this Anti-Semitic assault: the mass immigration of Jews to a land that they could call their own. Thus the Dreyfus case became one of the determinants in the genesis of political Zionism.

"Herzl concluded that antisemitism was a stable and immutable factor in human society, which assimilation did not solve. He mulled over the idea of Jewish sovereignty, and, despite ridicule from Jewish leaders, published *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish State) in 1896.

"Herzl argued that the essence of the Jewish problem was not individual, but national. He declared that the Jews could gain acceptance in the world only if they ceased being a national anomaly. The Jews are one people, he said, and their plight could be transformed into a positive force by the establishment of a Jewish state with the consent of the great powers. He saw the Jewish question as an interna-

Continued

COMMEMORATIVE DESIGNS EVOLVE



Images courtesy ICMC

The 1961 5-lir commemorative saw the evolution of design with a reduced denomination numeral replaced in former size by a fruit-bearing olive branch on the obverse. The reverse depicts an ancient synagogue Ark with a Hebrew inscription. Zvi Narkiss designed the reverse.

Continued

tional political question to be dealt with in the arena of international politics.

“Herzl proposed a practical program for collecting funds from Jews around the world by an organization which would work towards the practical realization of this goal (this organization, when it was eventually formed, was called the Zionist Organization.) He saw the future state as a model social state, basing his ideas on the European model of the time of a modern enlightened society. It would be neutral and peace-seeking, and secular in nature.

“Herzl’s ideas were met with enthusiasm by the Jewish masses in Eastern Europe, although Jewish leaders were less ardent. Still, Herzl convened and chaired the First Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland, on August 29-31, 1897 — the first interterritorial gathering of Jews on a national and secular basis. Here the delegates adopted the Basle Program, the

program of the Zionist movement, and declared ‘Zionism seeks to establish a home for the Jewish people in Palestine secured under public law.’ At the Congress the Zionist Organization was established as the political arm of the Jewish people, and Herzl was elected its first president. In the same year, Herzl founded the Zionist weekly *Die Welt* and began activities to obtain a charter for Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel (Eretz Yisrael).”

The coins commemorating Israel’s 13th Anniversary of Independence, replaced the simple obverse design by Karoli that was used previously — featuring a large 5 — with an olive branch with 10 leaves and three olives, representing 13 years of the Jewish State.

Olive branches can also be seen on both sides of the menorah on Israel’s coat-of-arms — because an olive branch has symbolized peace based on “the dove came

Continued

TALENTED DESIGNERS CONTRIBUTE



Zvi Narkiss (1922 to 2010) was a Romanian-born designer who designed coins, bank notes and stamps for Israel, including the reverse of the 1961 5-lirot commemorative and a 1972 Chanukah stamp.

Continued

in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: and so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth” (Gen. 8:11).

The coin’s reverse pictures an ancient synagogue Ark — containing Torah scrolls — viewed from their ends, with steps leading up to the Ark. The Ark is flanked by the Hebrew words — “Bar” on the right and “Mitzvah” on the left. This handsome design is by Zvi Narkiss.

Zvi Narkiss (1921 to 2010) emigrated from Romania to Eretz Israel in 1944. From 1950, he was a freelance designer of coins, medals, banknotes, stamps, books, and posters, including 16 Hebrew typefaces. Narkiss served as academic consultant to the graphic design course of the Technion, Israel’s Institute of Technology, and as lecturer in Graphic Design and

Typography. He also served as member of the academic promotion committee at Bezalel, Israel’s major academy of Art and Design, and as a member of the national advisory committee to the Bank of Israel, for the design of new banknotes and coins.

Living a Jewish Life by Anita Diamant and Howard Cooper presents the history of Bar Mitzvahs:

“Bar mitzvah does not appear in the bible, which gives the age of 20 as the time when adult obligations begin. However, by the first century CE adulthood was universally held to begin at 13 for boys and 12 for girls, a view codified in the Talmud, which states, ‘At age 13, one becomes subject to the commandments.’

“The earliest reference to any ceremony to mark this change dates from the Second Temple period, when a special blessing

Continued

BAR MITZVAHS CHANGE OVER TIME



Image courtesy Bank of Israel

The 1982 500 Sheqalim bank note with the portrait of Baron Edmond de Rothschild also was designed by Zvi Narkiss, who also designed several of Israel's commemorative coins.

Continued

was recited for 13-year-old boys who had completed their first Yom Kippur fast. But until the Middle Ages, the religious distinction between a 10-year-old and a 13-year-old was strictly theoretical. Children were regularly counted for the purposes of creating a minyan, the quorum often needed for certain prayers, so that reaching the age of 13 was not associated with any particular rituals or celebrations.

“That approach to ritual maturity changed drastically sometime between the 14 and 16th century in Germany and Poland, where minors were no longer permitted to read from the Torah or be counted in a minyan. From that point in history, bar mitzvah became an important life-cycle event throughout the Jewish world. Boys were called to the Torah to symbolize the attainment of adult status in the prayer life of the community.”

The central act of this rite was receiving the honor of an aliyah, of being called to bless and/or read from the Torah. However, other elements were soon added to the ceremony. As early as the 16th century, bar mitzvah boys were delivered d'rashot, discourses on the Torah portion that they had read. In the 17th and 18th centuries, some synagogues permitted accomplished students to lead part of the service as well. As with every joyful occasion, or simcha, bar mitzvah carried with it the obligation of a seudat mitzvah, a commanded meal of celebration.

Mintages of the 13th Anniversary of Independence coins were 19,407 in Brilliant Uncirculated and 4,495 in Proof; issue prices were \$4.50 and \$9, respectively. Sylvia Haffner Magnus writes: “The Bar Mitzvah coin, like the Exile coin, is usually found badly scratched.” נח

To Be Continued ...

IN MEMORIAM:

Arnold Spaer 1919 - 2011

Arnold Spaer, a specialist in ancient coins with a particular emphasis on the Seleucids and their monetary system, died on March 4, 2011, in Jerusalem.

Born to Mark and Ada Spaer in the Free State of Danzig on March 28, 1919, Arnold left the city with his family after the local Nazi party seized control of the city government and demanded the return of Danzig to Germany in 1933.

The Spaer family arrived in Tel Aviv in 1934; Arnold enrolled in the Ben-Yehuda Gymnasium. In 1937 he began the study of law at the Government School of Law in Jerusalem. As a student, he interned in the office of Bernard (Dov) Joseph, later a prominent statesman and minister. Spaer would settle permanently in Jerusalem.

In World War II, Spaer joined the British war campaign; serving as a VCO (Viceroy's Commissioned Officer) with the Second Indian Division in the Middle East to work on censorship in Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo and Tripoli.

In 1944, Spaer began his long career as a lawyer. At the age of 92, Spaer still worked daily in his office.

During Israel's War of Independence Spaer served as an officer and lawyer, assisting Dov Joseph, then the military governor of besieged Jerusalem.

Spaer developed his passion for col-



Arnold Spaer, 1919 - 2011

lecting from an early age, starting with postage stamps — an excellent tool for the study of geography.

His first ancient coins, acquired at age eight, were three late bronze issues of Constantine, while the family was still in Danzig.

As a student in Jerusalem, Spaer continued to buy coins, eventually focusing

on Seleucid and Crusader coinage.

The Seleucids and their monetary system were his greatest interest. His judicious purchases over the next five-plus decades resulted in a major collection of coins from Seleucus I (312 to 280 BCE) to Antiochus XIII (66/5 to 64 BCE). His first Seleucid coin was a silver tetradrachm, bought in 1940 on the erroneous assumption that it was of Alexander the Great. This coin turned his attention to Seleucid coinage.

"At that time I was an articled clerk in a law office," Spaer said in a past interview.

"To get to work I had to pass by Steimatzky's book shop in downtown Jerusalem four times a day. Outside this shop sat an elderly bearded gentleman on a wooden orange crate. His official occupation was the sale of small Hebrew pocket diaries for about one penny each. He used to wear two waistcoats beneath a black frock-coat, as was the custom of Orthodox Jews in

Continued

SPAER'S SELEUCID RESEARCH VITAL

Continued

Jerusalem. In each of the eight pockets of the waistcoats he kept ancient coins of all types and the implements to clean them (a screw and some sand). During each of my first three daily passings, we negotiated about the possible acquisition of coins.

"At the time it was quite customary to bargain for a fortnight about whether a Roman denarius should cost an English shilling, or perhaps 13 pence. His coins came mainly from Arab peasants living around Jerusalem, and quite frequently he would buy hoards of coins of all periods."

Spaer purchased his coins on the local market, mainly in Jerusalem, but also in Turkey, Central Europe and elsewhere. He maintained a meticulous card index of his collection of more than 10,000 coins, and included details of acquisition and provenance, when available.

Among Spaer's important contributions to numismatics was the publication of the catalog of his Seleucid coins. A long, friendly association with Arthur Houghton, a leading authority in the field, led to the publication of *The Arnold Spaer Collection of Seleucid Coins* (London, 1998). This fascinating 389-page volume, displaying 2,919 coins on 189 plates of excellent photographs by Zeev Radovan, is a work of lasting value for scholars as well as collectors. The book presents Seleucid coinage in general, with great detail about minting and circulation in ancient Palestine, southern Phoenicia and Syria. It is extremely important in the research of Seleucid coinage.

In the introduction, Houghton describes the collection as "more than a dry catalogue of Seleucid coins. It benefits from, but corrects and extends, research on Seleucid numismatics of the past half-century, in a manner that gives reasonable certainty to the attribution of most coins in the collection, including, because of Arnold Spaer's meticulous notes, most of the unknowns."

Spaer's numismatic collection and interests also extended into ancient Phoenicia, Samaritan coinage and the Crusader series. He also assembled a collection of antiquities, including fine glass vessels, ossuaries, and early pottery.

Spaer was a member of the boards of the Hecht Museum in Haifa and the L. A. Mayer Museum for Islamic Art in Jerusalem. After the sudden death of Leo Kadman during the opening of the International Numismatic Convention on Dec. 27, 1963, Spaer was instrumental in bringing about the publication of Volume Three of the *Israel Numismatic Journal* (1965/6); he was also involved in the resumption of the series in 1980 and continued to be of assistance to the Journal.

Arnold Spaer is survived by his wife Maud Spaer, a renowned scholar in the area of ancient glass and author of *Ancient Glass in the Israel Museum: Beads and Other Small Objects* (Jerusalem, 2001); by three sons (Michael, Daniel and Uri) and nine grandchildren. □

(Adapted from the Israel Numismatic Journal, Vol. 17, dedicated to Arnold Spaer; Dan Barag and Boaz Zissu, authors.)

Bank Note Design Competition

Israel will be replacing its current banknotes with a new series of notes, and designers have been invited to participate in a competition to determine the best new designs.

According to the plan, the banknotes in circulation today — the Second Series of the New Israel Sheqel, issued in 1999 — will be replaced by new, redesigned banknotes that will carry advanced security features. The denominations will not change: the new series of banknotes will be issued in the current denominations of NIS 20, 50, 100, and 200.

The replacement of banknotes every decade or so is necessary to keep ahead of counterfeiters attacking a nation's currency. In a reversal of an arms race, the defensive capabilities of nation's notes to resist counterfeiters lasts only until the criminals find new ways to defeat the color-changing inks, micro-printing, ultraviolet markings, polymer substrates, hidden threads, and other techniques adopted in recent years.

The Public Committee for the Planning of Banknotes and Coins will serve as a referee committee, on behalf of the Governor of the Bank of Israel, for the choice of a design and a designer of the series from the design works that reach the final stage of the proceeding. The Committee will examine the design works from the standpoints of aesthetics, artistic quality, and suitability for successful performance as banknotes, according to the Bank of Israel.

Prizes totaling NIS 300,000 will be awarded to the top three design works under the terms of the proceeding, as follows:



A 1968 Israel 5 lirot banknote portrayed scientist and activist Albert Einstein.

First prize, NIS 150,000; Second prize, NIS 100,000; and Third prize, NIS 50,000.

Requirements of potential designers include, among others: Be a citizen or resident of Israel; hold a certificate attesting to the completion of higher studies in design and graphics and at least five years' proven experience in graphic design work, or alternatively: at least 10 years' proven experience in graphic design work; possess strong proficiency in Hebrew and English; be free of convictions of "moral turpitude" and more.

The Bank of Israel presents the full version of the competition's requirements on the its website at <http://www.bankisrael.org.il/bn-design.htm>.

The deadline for entering is Sunday, July 17, 2011, at 2 p.m. Bids may be tendered Sunday through Thursday between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m., in Jerusalem, at the Bank of Israel, Kiryat Ben-Gurion, South Wing, Central Purchasing Unit; or in Tel Aviv, at the Bank of Israel branch at 69, Nahalat Binyamin Street, to the postal clerk.

For further details, call the Bank of Israel, 02-6552838 or 02-6552789; Human Resources & Administration Dept., Central Purchasing Unit. ☎

PROFILE: PAUL KAHANE

A numismatist at heart

Paul Kahane was born and raised in an area known as the lower East Side of Manhattan. To this day, Paul can say that he was born, raised and still lives in New York City. He grew up during the declining days of cobblestone streets, wood pushcarts, clotheslines hanging between buildings with laundry waving in the breeze, horse-drawn wagons selling ice, vendors hawking their wares, and even the elevated Third Avenue rail line.

His mother Anna raised Paul and his older sister by working many years sewing linings into men's hats. Trying to help earn some extra money for the family, one of Paul's earliest jobs began around the age of 11 as a delivery boy for a local floral shop and a grocer. Paul learned early as a child that "the best way to get ahead in life was to get a good and extensive education."

After completing Community College where Paul majored in electrical technology, he enlisted in the U.S. Army, serving six years, and rising to the rank of Master



Paul Kahane

Sergeant. Upon discharge from the Army, Paul continued his education, earning a doctorate in Economics. Paul began teaching economics as a professor at Fordham University, the Rose Hill campus in the Bronx. He also taught investments at the Murry Bergtram Business and Adult

Education Center. Recently retired from Fordham, Paul rounds out his teaching career as a part-time instructor at the Henry George School of Social Science, teaching economics and investment courses.

Since retiring, Paul has filled some of his non-teaching time writing, and publishing, three books with the third coming out soon.

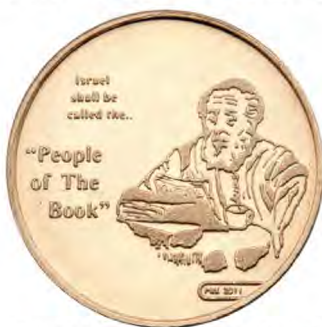
In addition to being an author, having written *On Some Matters of Interest*, *Our Vested Interests*, and *Clarifications and Relevance of Henry George*, Paul holds membership in two professional organizations, the American Economic Association, and the Eastern Economic Association.

Paul goes on to state that he was not always a teacher. He spent 27

Continued on Page 64

History runs deep in “People of the Book”

Would you believe that “The People of the Book” were first mentioned in the Qur’an? The story behind AINA’s 2011 Medal.



By Mel Wacks

The 2011 AINA medal “People of the Book” obverse was designed by AINA member numismatist and artist Paul Kahane.

In his book *People of the Book*, Moshe Halbertal begins with this story told by one of his teachers: “Don’t think that hell is where people are consumed by fire for their sins or that heaven is where they are rewarded with pleasures for their piety. What really happens is that God gathers everybody in one large hall. Then He gives them the Talmud and commands them to start studying. For the wicked, studying Talmud is hell. For the pious it’s heaven.” And Halbertal concludes that “Clearly the role of sacred text in Jewish life is so profound that even the afterlife cannot be imagined without it.”

Quite surprisingly (at least to me), Frank Peters writes in the People of the Book entry in www.oxfordbibliographiesonline.com: “The formal expression “People of the Book” (ahl al-kitab) is a Muslim one ... It is used in the Qur’an quite literally to designate people who possess a book, a revealed scripture. In Muhammad’s world, that would be the Jews, who have the Torah (Tawrat), and the Christians, with their Gospel.”

But this quote from the Qur’an applies this term exclusively to the Israelites: “They (Israel) are called the “people of the Book” whom Moses led into the promised land and to whom that land belongs to (Surah 2:63, 5:19-24, 68,70; 10:91,94; 44:30, etc.).

“And (remember) when Moses said unto his people: O my people! Remember Allah’s favour unto you, how he placed among you prophets, and he made you kings, and gave you that (which) He gave not to any (other) of (His) creatures. O my people! Go into the holy land which Allah hath ordained for you (Surat Al-Maidah 5:20- 21 MPT). “Remember Allah’s favor to you...He...gave you what he gave no other of his creatures. O my people, go into the Holy Land which Allah hath ordained for you” (95:20, 21); And we said unto the Children of Israel...dwell in the land [and] hereafter... we shall bring you...out of various nations” (17:103, 104).

In 1981, Israel’s 33rd Anniversary of Independence coins commemorated “The

Continued

ORIGIN OF AINA 2011 MEDAL THEMES

Continued

People of the Book.” The Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation wrote that: “The ‘Book of Books’ was given to the Jewish people who are therefore called, ‘The People of the Book.’ The Bible was written in Hebrew and over the generations scribes and scholars copied letters, sentences and passages, thus preserving the spiritual independence and culture of the nation, even during the long period that it was dispersed among other nations.” The coin’s design features an open book and the flowing image of the Hebrew alphabet above; the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet formed the basis of two Jewish languages spoken in the Diaspora - Yiddish and Ladino.

Today, the expression “People of the Book” is seemingly applied exclusively to Jewish readers of Jewish-referenced texts—not necessarily holy texts—as indicated in this article on www.jewishlibraries.org: “The People of the Book really do love libraries! In November 2010, during Jewish Book Month, 30 Jewish libraries participated in Library Snapshot Day.

The event, sponsored by the Association of Jewish Libraries, was created to let all types of Judaic libraries record what happens in a day in the life of a library. Across North America, libraries in synagogues, day schools, community centers and universities picked one day during the first two weeks of November to hold the event. Collectively, participating libraries served 3,548 patrons on Library Snapshot Day.”

The People of the Book are commemorated by AINA member Paul Kahane on



Images courtesy Israel Coins and Medals Corp. In 1981, Israel issued the spectacularly designed 2-sheqalim silver and 10-sheqalim commemorative gold coins honoring “The People of the Book.”

the 2011 AINA 32-mm medal. The AINA logo, on the reverse, was designed by one of AINA’s founders, Nat Sobel.

Just 900 were minted from golden-brass in Prooflike quality by The Highland Mint, and were sent free to all paid-up AINA members. And if you look closely at the design, you will see that the person is reading *The Shekel* - just as you are! ☞

KAHANE DESIGN ON AINA 2011 MEDAL

Continued from Page 61

years as a “planner” at Con Edison Company of New York prior to working at Fordham.

Paul remembers fondly how and when he became “a collector” by looking through pocket change every day as a boy.

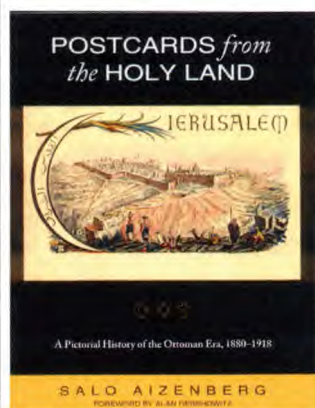
One day he discovered being given in change a 1941 over 42 Liberty Head silver dime. It wasn’t the silver that caught his eye, it was the strikeover. Worth then about \$1.50, today the coin is worth about \$200. Paul still has this dime in his collection, making him a “true numismatist by heart.”

In addition to collecting coins, Paul is also a stamp collector, and collects only stamps of Israel. His stamp collection extends from almost from the founding of the State of Israel right up to the present. Most of his stamps are of the “tab” variety in which an appendage to the stamp adds to its story.

Paul is and has been a long-time subscriber of the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation, now known as the Israel Coins and Medals Corporation. Through the ICMC, Paul first learned about AINA’s 2008 tour to Israel. “Even though a philatelic and numismatic collector of Israel, I have taken an even greater interest in these two forms as art and expression since the AINA tour.”

Being so impressed and so moved from his visit to the Yad Vashem Museum, Paul wanted to express his feelings by designing a medal, which ultimately became the 2010 AINA medal, and thus began Paul’s interest in medals. His second design became the featured annual design of AINA’s 2011 medal, *People of the Book*. In addition to being a numismatist and a philatelist, Paul Kahane is also a medallic sculptor - a true numismatist at heart ... □

Written by Donna J. Sims, NLG



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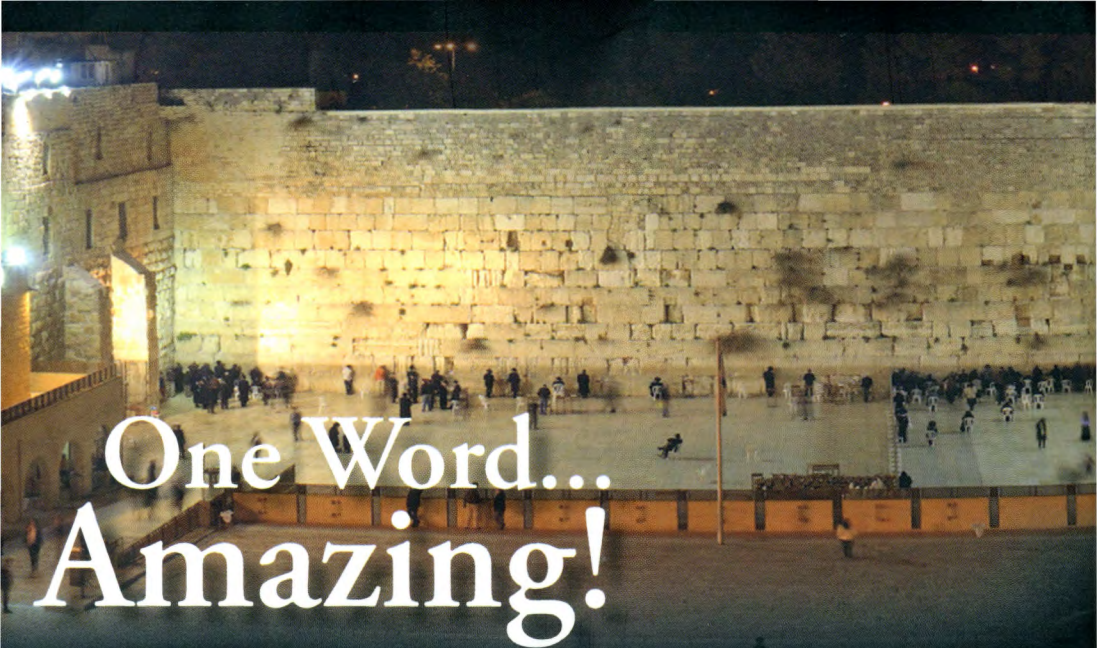
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